

Prior to July 2nd, 2004, we had satisfactory experiences with Cingular Wireless, but that changed on July 2nd, when we visited their Rosenberg store to:

- 1) Transfer the account name for business reasons
- 2) Upgrade the service plan from a home plan to a nationwide plan
- 3) Buy new phones

The account transfer went through, and with it an additional two year contract, but after several attempts by the salesman to change our plan, he learned that Cingular was experiencing a programming malfunction, or glitch as they termed it, that kept many clients from upgrading to a nationwide plan. A trouble ticket was placed on our order. Both the salesman and the store manager assured us that there would be no problem once the glitch in their system was cleared up within a two week period. In addition Hector, our salesman, assured us that it wasn't worth paying for or taking our phones at that time, since they were useless to us, so he was going to set aside both the phones and the paperwork until the glitch was corrected.

July 15th, thirteen days later, 1 day short of the promised two weeks, we contacted Hector to check on the status of our account. We learned that Mike's phone was cleared for the upgrade, but that mine was not. Hector assured us that he was checking daily on the status. He also reminded Mike about something that Mike didn't recall stating, and that was the importance of the account transfer, with the upgrade and phones being secondary. We called Cingular's contact number, 1-800-331-0500, and spoke with Kim Parks. She couldn't seem to understand why we didn't have our new phones or the upgraded plan, so she connected us to a manager named Jessie Cruz, who told us that many people had suffered through the same glitch, and that their technical department was working on it.

Our frustration just increased because we felt that we had spent an hour of our time for an account transfer just to receive an additional two year contract. We had no phones or plan upgrade, and we couldn't get the upgrade or the new phones unless both of us were cleared!

July 22nd, we called the Rosenberg store to speak with Hector, and were placed on hold for almost thirty minutes. When Hector came on, and after I identified myself, he stated, "I'm busy with customers, I'll have to call you back." I then asked, "Aren't I a customer?" He then repeated that he was busy with customers, and promised to return my call, but never did. We called Cingular's contact number, 1-800-331-0500, and spoke with Jeanette Torez. She seemed unaware of the glitch, and attempted to connect us with a supervisor named, Mark, but we were disconnected. At 6:45 pm we called again only to be told by Jessie Sanchez that the manager refused to speak with us. We called the contact number again, only to speak with a Latoya, who also could not help us, in that the supervisor refused to speak with us. Mike then attempted to contact customer service, again, and was told that it was impossible to connect a customer to a specific service agent, so

the problem needs to be repeated to a new individual each time customer service is contacted. This time Mike spoke to Eric, who told him that he would turn it over to technical support and call him back the next day. We did not hear from Eric the next day. We were so frustrated that we even asked about the cost to cancel their service, and considered spending the \$150/line, just to start fresh.

We attempted to reach Hector on Friday, July 23rd, only to learn that he was on vacation. We didn't know what to do, so we called Cingular's contact number, again, and spoke to Mary Pierce, who listened to our frustrations and connected us to a supervisor named Dennis Barnes. We explained our situation, as he checked our record. He apologized for the "run around" we had gotten, and promised us relief. He took our home telephone number, and actually called us back! He thought he could get our problem cleared by Saturday, but called us when he learned that it would take until Monday. Not only did he listen to our problem and work on a remedy, he gave us the number of his direct line, just in case we required assistance. We cannot say enough wonderful things about Mary Pierce or Dennis Barnes! Prior to Ms. Pierce and Mr. Barnes we believed that there was no service in their customer service. These two should be the standard for which all others are evaluated!

There is a happy ending, in that we visited Cingular's Meyerland Plaza store and met with Janet Allen, a sales associate. Within 45 minutes she patiently provided us with the information needed to make informed decisions, upgraded our service and initiated service on our new phones. She was wonderful!

It is unfortunate that we were forced to suffer through Cingular Wireless' disservice for so long. Being shuffled through a series of uninformed and uncaring people is not service. Having to continuously repeat the same problem adds to the frustration. It is sad to note that instead of people talking to people, customer service created greater problems and frustrations by their seeming to be programmed to pass on the problem, with no relief in sight. It is therefore with great frustration and concern we are writing in hopes of helping all those Cingular customers who are not fortunate enough to luck into a Mary Pierce or Dennis Barnes in customer service, or a Janet Allen in sales.

In conclusion, instead of creating a troubling spiraling effect with their programmed responses, wouldn't it have been easier to simply have started us over instead of taking the seemingly immature stance of a child with his tongue sticking out tauntingly laughing at us for having an additional two years with nothing more to show for it?